



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

FACT SHEET

MAYOR SANDERS SIGNS AGGRESSIVE NEW LAW TO REDUCE NUMBER OF NEGLECTED, ABANDONED PROPERTIES

***New ordinance adds new teeth to City's ability to
clean up dangerous and blighted properties***

February 7, 2006

Background

- Hundreds of vacant or abandoned properties currently blight our City's neighborhoods.
- Vacant boarded properties invite a host of unwelcome activity and blight in a neighborhood: graffiti, dumping, overgrowth of weeds, and a location for drug transactions, prostitution and transients. Severe deterioration of a single property often leads to the deterioration of many properties and can promote economic decay in a neighborhood.
- Vacant Property Laws have been on the books in San Diego since 1993, and the Neighborhood Code Compliance Department (NCCD) has been able to successfully work with many property owners during that time to rehabilitate blighted property. Since its inception 700 properties have been returned to productive use and 30 properties have been demolished.
- Currently there are 165 vacant or abandoned properties identified by the City's NCCD.
- Despite many successes, loopholes in the law allow some property owners to pay fines, but not clean up their blighted property.

What the New Law Does:

- The new laws address some of the loopholes that currently exist. The new laws significantly raise the fees and fine assessed on the owner of a vacant or abandoned property.

- Under the existing ordinance, owners of vacant structures can be fined \$250 quarterly, not to exceed \$1,000 per year.
- Under the new ordinance, owners of vacant structures can be fined up to \$5,000 annually.
 - Under the existing ordinance, owners of neglected vacant property must file a one time “Statement of Intent,” stating how they plan to clean up the property.
 - Under the new ordinance, owners of neglected vacant property will be required to file a “Statement of Intent” annually, until the property is cleaned up.
- The new law gives the Neighborhood Code Compliance Officers tools to more aggressively address properties where owners continue to pay fines, yet do not clean up the property.
 - Previously, various nuisance conditions had to be cited separately, under different codes contained throughout the Municipal Code.
 - Under the new law, all nuisance condition will be addressed from one Municipal Code section.

Future related Municipal Code Amendments:

- Address “perennial remodels.” These are properties where building activity has been going on for several years.
- Expand program to address vacant lots.
- Expand program to address commercial buildings.